Are Early Marriages a Success?

THE VIEWS OF SIR FRANCIS BURNAND, SIR WILLIAM CROOKES, HENRIETTA RAE, DR. CLIFFORD, AND MR. CYRIL MAUDE.

There is perhaps no subject of so much general and debatable interest as the question of "The Success of Early Marriages." There are extant many celebrated instances of early marriages of great men which have proved a thorough success. One that will occur to everybody is that of the late Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. The marriage of the late Marquis and Marchioness of Salisbury was also a youthful one and highly successful.

On the other hand, lamentable tragedies, which have marred otherwise notable lives, have been directly traceable to early and indiscreet marriages.

To gather valuable opinions on the subject, the Reader invited several well-known men and women to express their views, with the following result:

Sir William Crookes, the noted scientist, has all through his strenuous life been a warm advocate of early marriage. Marrying in his early twenties, he recently celebrated the jubilee of that event, and his long experience has only emphasized his opinion on the subject, an opinion which is equally shared by Lady Crookes.

SIR FRANCIS BURNAND SAYS "YES."

Sir Francis Burnand, the ex-editor of Punch, writes: "Granting that the parties are genuinely in love with each other, that they are of the same religion, that they have a sufficient income according to their station in life, and a fairly certain prospect of increasing it considerably in the future; granting also that they are sane and sound, and that they have the full and free consent of their parents to their union, then the sooner the young couple—the girl, we will say, being 18, and the young man 22—become man and wife the better.

"Should, however, money be wanting, then let them wait until the financial position be at least as I have stated above. One of the happiest marriages I have known has been where the engaged couple have waited for each other until the lover was able to say, 'Now I am in a position to provide for the present, and, God willing, for the future.' No proverb is more true than that concerning 'marrying in haste and repenting at leisure.' And the first and foremost condition of happiness is that man and wife be of one faith, that is, of the same religion. There are exceptions, of course, but they are rare."

"A MISTAKE," SAYS MR. CYRIL MAUDE.

Mr. Cyril Maude, the popular actor-manager of the Playhouse, holds a distinctly contrary view. He says: "From what I have observed in life, I think they (early marriages) are a very great mistake."

From Mrs. Ernest Normand (Henrietta Rae), the exquisite painter of classical pictures, also comes an emphatic protest against "early marriages."

"I believe in a long youth," said Mrs. Normand to the Reader, "and in letting girls have a healthy, jolly time before they settle down to the anxieties—for there are many even in happy marriages—of married life.

"Married happiness, however, is entirely a question of temperament and suitability to each other.

"The first, the baby love of youth, is never a good one to marry on; unless tempered by years of mutual knowledge; and this brings us to the question of long engagements, with which I do not agree."

HENRIETTA RAE ADVOCATES CELIBACY.

"The professional woman, too, should never marry, or, if she marries, it should be to someone outside her own profession. Little jealousies will creep in when two of a profession marry, which must tend to mar the mutual life and mutual regard and esteem. But from my observation, the woman with a profession is happiest unmarried.

"Then, again, a woman before her 26th birthday is not mentally or physically fit for the responsibilities of married life, and the man is seldom mentally or financially equipped to meet the demands on his resources and temper before that age.

"No, I do not agree with early marriages. Let youth have its youth—carefree, buoyant, with time to build health and fortune before assuming the full responsibilities of life."

"Happiness in married life is all a question of character," said Dr. Clifford to the Reader, with characteristic energy: "I have married a great number of couples of all ages, and some of the most youthful marriages have turned out most successfully, whilst, on the other hand, people of maturer years—well, their marriage has proved an utter failure. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that on the broad and general principle the happiness of married life depends not on age, but on character."

DR. CLIFFORD SAYS: "MARRY YOUNG."

"To secure married happiness there must be love. This is essential, and this love must include a deep and lasting regard for each other. I have married a great number of young couples who had this inner unity and mutual consideration, and whose characters assimilated. I have watched their lives develop into one of continued domestic happiness and usefulness.

"I believe, too, in young people marrying early if they are sure of each other, and not waiting for so-called sufficient means. This is pure nonsense. There must, of course, be enough to live upon, but if the woman is a good manager, it is remarkable on how little a happy home can be built up.

"Old age pensions would be a great incentive to young people to start early, as their greatest care—the future—would be lifted from them. It would be much more comfortable and restful to contemplate an old age pension for their later years instead of the workhouse.

"But everything depends on the woman. She can make or mar married happiness. The character of the wife is far more important than the man's. The woman controls the home exchequer, and by her management and thrift can make domestic happiness possible upon the smallest income; of course, providing the husband is neither a spendthrift nor a drunkard.

"I cannot answer the question more definitely than that," concluded Dr. Clifford, "but, given sobriety on the man's part, good management on the woman's, mutual attachment, a true union of souls, then all marriages must be happy, whether early or late, but I believe in the earlier marriages, as the young people's characters would assimilate more readily."

MIRABEAU--LEADER OF FORLORN HOPE

SKETCH OF THE MAN WHO TRIED TO AVERT THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND SAVE THE KING.

[Albert Payson Terhune, in the New York World.]

Count Honore de Mirabeau—dissolute, wise, reckless—was the connecting link between Aristocracy and People in the bloodiest struggle the world has known.

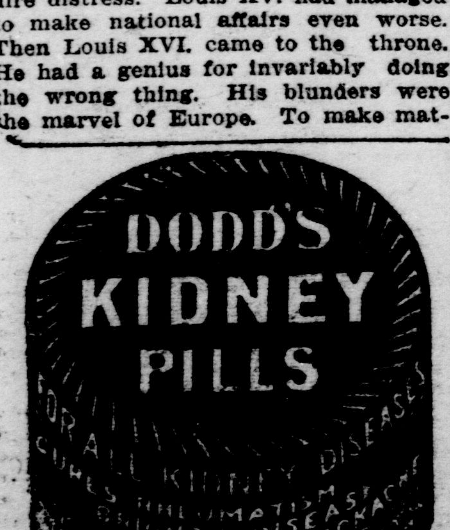
Mirabeau was the son of a marquis, and was educated for the army — the only profession except the church then open to a nobleman. He was hideously disfigured by smallpox scars. In spite of this he was the most fascinating man of his day, and was adored by innumerable women. In 1767, when only eighteen, he incurred his father's displeasure by a love affair and was put into prison. At intervals he served nearly a half-dozen such terms in jail during the next fifteen years, sometimes at his father's order (for noblemen of high rank had the power to send their sons to prison for minor offenses) and sometimes because he dared oppose the tyranny of the luxury; the king was a despot; a series of foreign wars drained the treasury. And for all this the plain people paid. The poor were ground down by iniquitous taxes and were practically slaves to the nobility. Other nations had outgrown this state of affairs, but in France they continued unabated. Yet the oppressed common folk were gradually awakening, and were preparing for a terrible vengeance on their oppressors. Louis XIV., in dying, had left France poor and in dire distress. Louis XV. had managed to make national affairs even worse. Then Louis XVI. came to the throne. He had a genius for invariably doing the wrong thing. His blunders were the marvel of Europe. To make matters worse, he married an Austrian princess, Marie Antoinette, who was gay, frivolous, intriguing and devoid of common sense. They were a well-mated couple.

The country was almost bankrupt and seethed with discontent. Mirabeau persuaded the king to summon the states general, a body composed of nobles, clergy and delegates of the people. But the aristocrats refused to confer on equal terms with the people's delegates, and the states general was dismissed. The people's candidate formed a new body known as the National Assembly. The king, at Marie Antoinette's advice, tried to break up this assembly, and the people promptly protected their delegates by raising a national guard, with Gen. Lafayette at its head. Louis was aghast at such audacity.

Mirabeau now tried to induce the king to grant a constitutional form of government and placate the malcontents, but, as usual, the poor, silly monarch was dissuaded, and planned to fly to the German frontier, there to summon foreign aid to crush his rebellious subjects. Mirabeau dissuaded him from this last rash step and at the same time by his own fiery eloquence partly held the angry people in check. He was the one point of contact—the one arbiter—between king and populace. Both parties trusted him, though neither would wholly follow his wise counsel. The Bastile (state prison and stronghold of royal power) was torn down by the mob on July 14, 1789, and the wave of revolution that was to engulf all royalty and nobility swept onward, only held back by Mirabeau's genius. How far this one great man might have changed history and averted the horrors of the reign of terror can never be known. For, in 1791, when only 42 years old, he died. Then the revolution burst forth in full force.

Louis and his wife and children, disregarding Mirabeau's warning, fled to the frontier. They were caught and brought back to Paris. Austria, Prussia and Spain formed an alliance to restore Louis to power. The allies entered France. The mob, in wild rage at the invasion, attacked the palace, massacred the 800 Swiss guards who sought to protect the royal family, and threw the king and queen and their children into prison. The king was tried and put to death (Jan. 21, 1793), as, later, was Marie Antoinette. Danton, Robespierre and Marat, the leaders of the revolution, ordered all political prisoners executed, and several thousands were thus slain. France was declared a Republic, modeled, allegedly, on the lines of the United States. Then, as all the aristocrats had fled to other countries or had been killed, the revolutionists split up in several parties and began killing each other. When the guillotine proved too slow, the party that chanced to be in control shot down its prisoners in platoons or drowned them by the hundred. A breath of suspicion was enough to send a man to death without trial. Danton was guillotined, Marat was stabbed, and at last Robespierre, too, fell under suspicion, and (July 28, 1794), was beheaded. Then came a reaction from the horrors of that long reign of terror in which more than 1,000,000 men, women and children are estimated to have been put to death. A new government, known as "The Directory," was formed to guide the young republic. Meantime foreign foes harassed the stricken country, and trade and progress were at a standstill.

Out of this horrible state of chaos and national exhaustion arose one mighty man—Napoleon Bonaparte.



SUICIDE STATISTICS.

Suicides in the United Kingdom have increased by 200 per cent in fifty years, and by 150 per cent in twenty-five years. In 1904, the last year for which official figures are available, 2,523 men and 822 women took their own lives in England and Wales alone, while the total in the metropolitan police district was 660. At least an equal number of persons were prevented from accomplishing their intention. How rapid has been the increase during recent years may be seen from the fact that suicides in England and Wales have increased from 479 women and 1,529 men in 1885 to 822 women and 2,523 men in 1904. There have been more than 50,000 suicides in England and Wales in twenty years.

Bad as is the case in England, in other countries the evil is even worse. According to statistics recently published by the Swiss Government, there have committed suicide during the last thirty-five years 16,640 persons in Switzerland, 323,600 persons in Germany and 274,000 persons in France.

German official figures put the number of suicides in Europe yearly at 70,000. Cases in the German Empire itself have risen from 10,500 in 1895 to 12,730 in 1905. In America the number is about 3,000 annually, and is increasing.—Social Gazette.

WAYS OF THE WOLF.

The wolf can go eight days with food and can then eat 40 pounds of meat at a sitting, so the Indians say. This is pretty fair for an animal weighing only 80 pounds. Yet we do not know the length of the sitting.

The wolf will not venture on glare ice; he never crosses a lake until there is enough snow to hide the ice. To wetting his feet he is as averse as the domestic cat. He will not kill his game in the shelter of the forest, always driving it into some open place for the kill.

When chasing a deer he goes at a leisurely lope, sitting down at intervals to give the most dolorous and blood-curdling howls. This drives the poor victim into a wild gallop, and soon exhausts it, and as the wolf never tires, he is sure, sooner or later, to catch up with the quarry.

In winter the deer often makes for some wild rapid, into which it plunges, knowing that the wolf will not follow. Too often the deer drowns, but better such a death than one by the fangs.

In summer a couple of wolves will secure all the deer they need by very simple tactics. Having put up the quarry, one wolf drives it by easy stages to some little lake—I speak now of the Laurentian country—and on reaching the shore the deer plunges unhesitatingly in, for its instinct tells it the enemy will not dare to follow.

So, on it swims, while the pursuer sits on his haunches and howls dismally, no doubt because he sees his dinner escaping. At length the tired deer drags itself wearily from the water and shakes the drops from its coat on the sun-warmed strand. Then the companion wolf, which has waylaid its coming, springs at its throat, and when the first wolf joins him they have a gorge that makes them independent of fate for a whole week.—Recreation.

REWARDS HER SOLDIERS.

Britain has generally been generous in rewarding her soldiers. Perhaps the Duke of Wellington came off best in this respect. In his earlier Peninsular campaign he was granted a pension of $10,000 a year for two generations, and on the conclusion of the Peninsular War in 1812, he was voted $1,000,000 for the purchase of an estate. After Waterloo the Government bought for him the estate of Strathfieldsaye at a cost of £263,000. Lord Wolseley received a grant of £25,000 on completing his Ashanti campaign; Sir Hugh Gough for the Sikh war, an annuity of £2,000; Sir Colin Campbell, £2,000 for wiping out the Indian mutiny, and Sir Henry Haverlock, for the relief of Lucknow £1,000. Coming to more recent times, Lord Roberts received £100,000 for his services in the South African campaign, and Lord Kitchener received £30,000 after Omdurman.